



# 30 Years of Smart Growth

## Arlington County's Experience with Transit Oriented Development in the Rosslyn-Ballston Metro Corridor



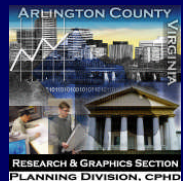
A Presentation by the Arlington County  
Department of Community Planning, Housing  
and Development, Planning Division

5-06

# PRESENTATION OVERVIEW

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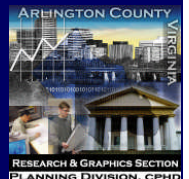
- Review of Arlington's efforts to use transit to both redevelop an older commercial corridor and ensure future riders for the system
- How we planned and some of the tools we used
- Identify some of the successes and lessons learned



# TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT

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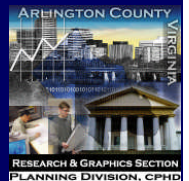
- Many American cities are at a crisis point
- We know we can't continue to grow as in the past
- It's too expensive to serve
- Work and home trips take too long and must always be car
- Wastes too much land



# TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT

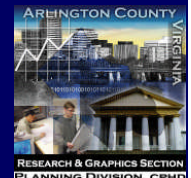
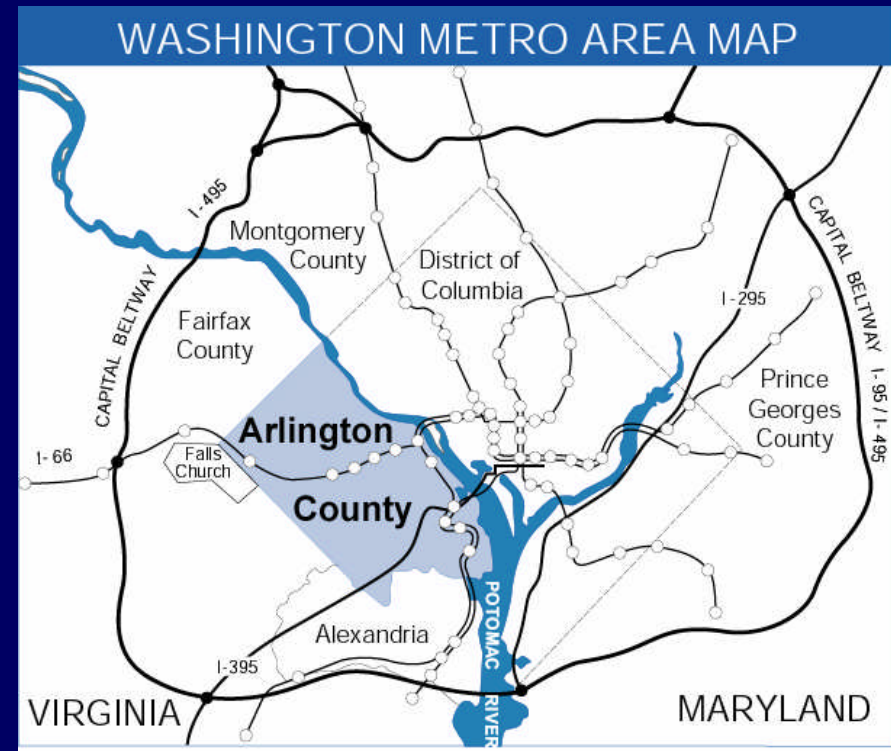
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- TOD and smart growth are current “buzz” words representing the desire for something different
- Another form of growth
- Arlington has been in the forefront of this trend for over 30 years



# SETTING THE STAGE

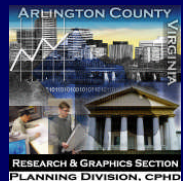
- Arlington is a 26 square mile, urban county which was a part of the original District of Columbia
- Population 193,800
- Jobs 206,200
- Housing units 94,700



# SETTING THE STAGE

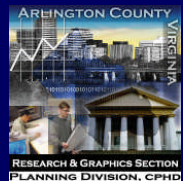
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- 1960 - 7.5 million sq. Ft. Office
- Declining retail corridors
- Emerging market for government office space
- Strong single family neighborhoods
- Large number of garden apartments, some of which were beginning to decline
- 97,505 jobs
- 71,230 housing units





# ROSSLYN



# COURT HOUSE





# CLARENDON



# ARLINGTON'S OLD DOWNTOWN

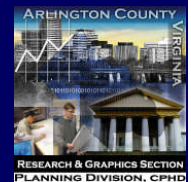




# CLARENDON THEN



# VIRGINIA SQUARE



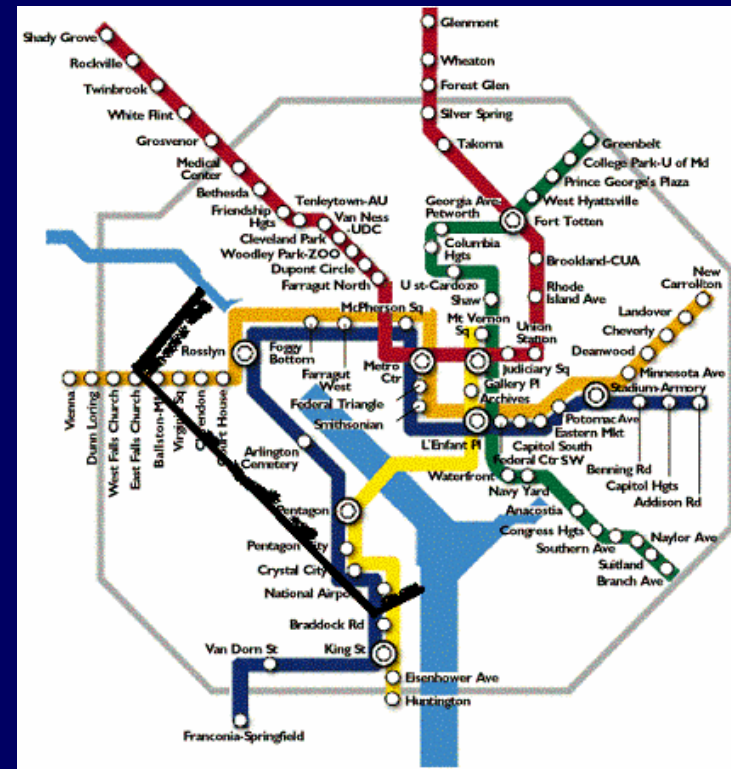
# PARKINGTON (BALLSTON)





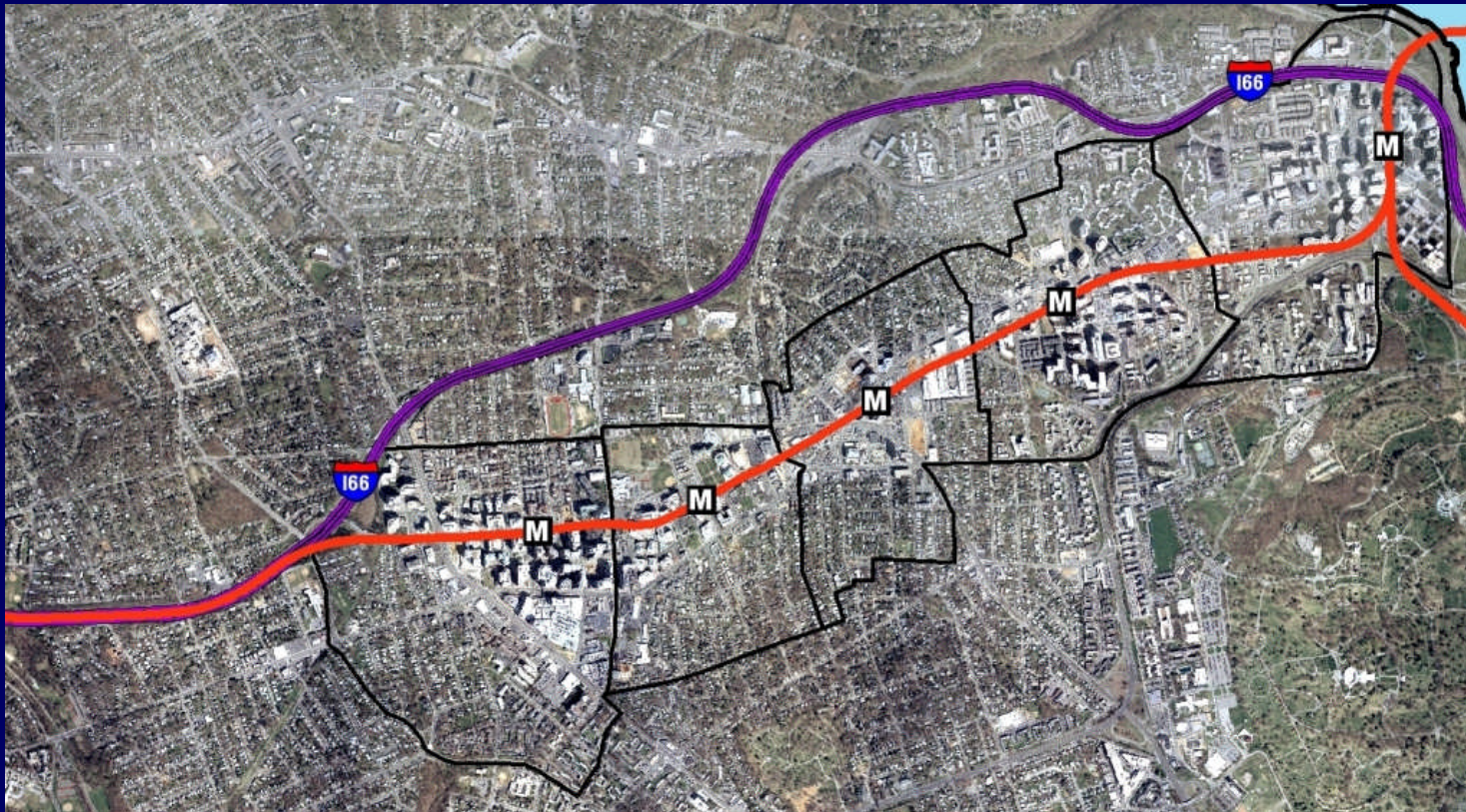
# SETTING THE STAGE

- Beginning of the planning for a regional transit system
- Embarked on an ambitious community planning effort
- Had already debated the impacts of development vs the benefits of growth and decided we wanted to encourage growth as well as encourage riders



# PLANNING HISTORY

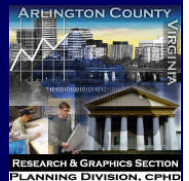
- Arlington lobbied strongly for an underground route along the old commercial corridor vs along the median of future highway
- Put up \$300 million local money for preferred routes and more stations



# HOW WE DID IT

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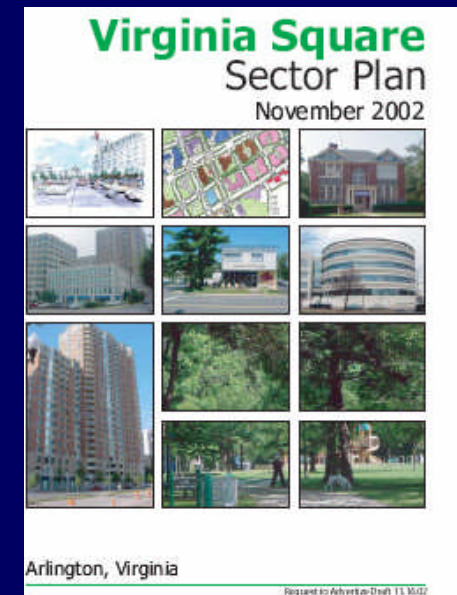
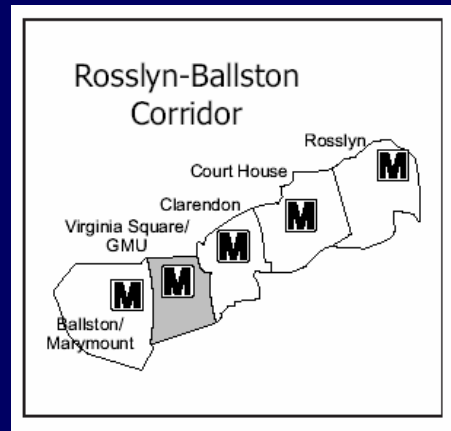
- The major policy goals that resulted were:
  - Strive for a 50/50 tax base mix of residential and commercial
  - Strive for mixed-use development with a significant level of residential
  - Preserve existing single family, garden apartments and green open spaces
  - Focus redevelopment within 1/4 mile of metro station entrances to encourage transit ridership
- Adopted a corridor-wide GLUP based on agreed-to development goals





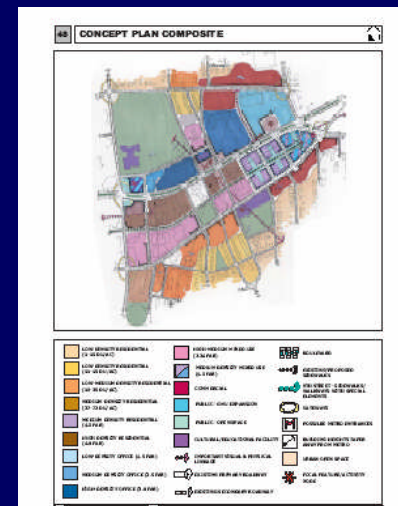
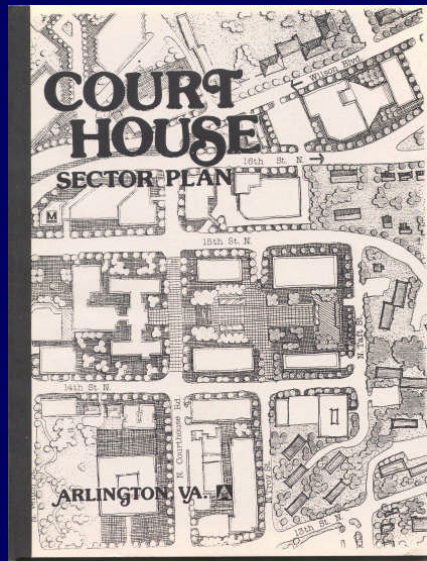
# SECTOR PLANS

- Then focused on developing sector plans to create distinctive “urban villages”
  - Overall vision for each station area
  - Desired public improvements
  - Location for retail
  - Urban design standards



# SECTOR PLANS

- Public infrastructure needs
- Open space, streetscape standards
- Each focused on an area of approximately 1/4 mile from the metro station



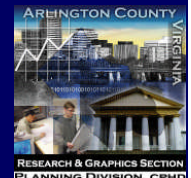


# KEY TO SUCCESS

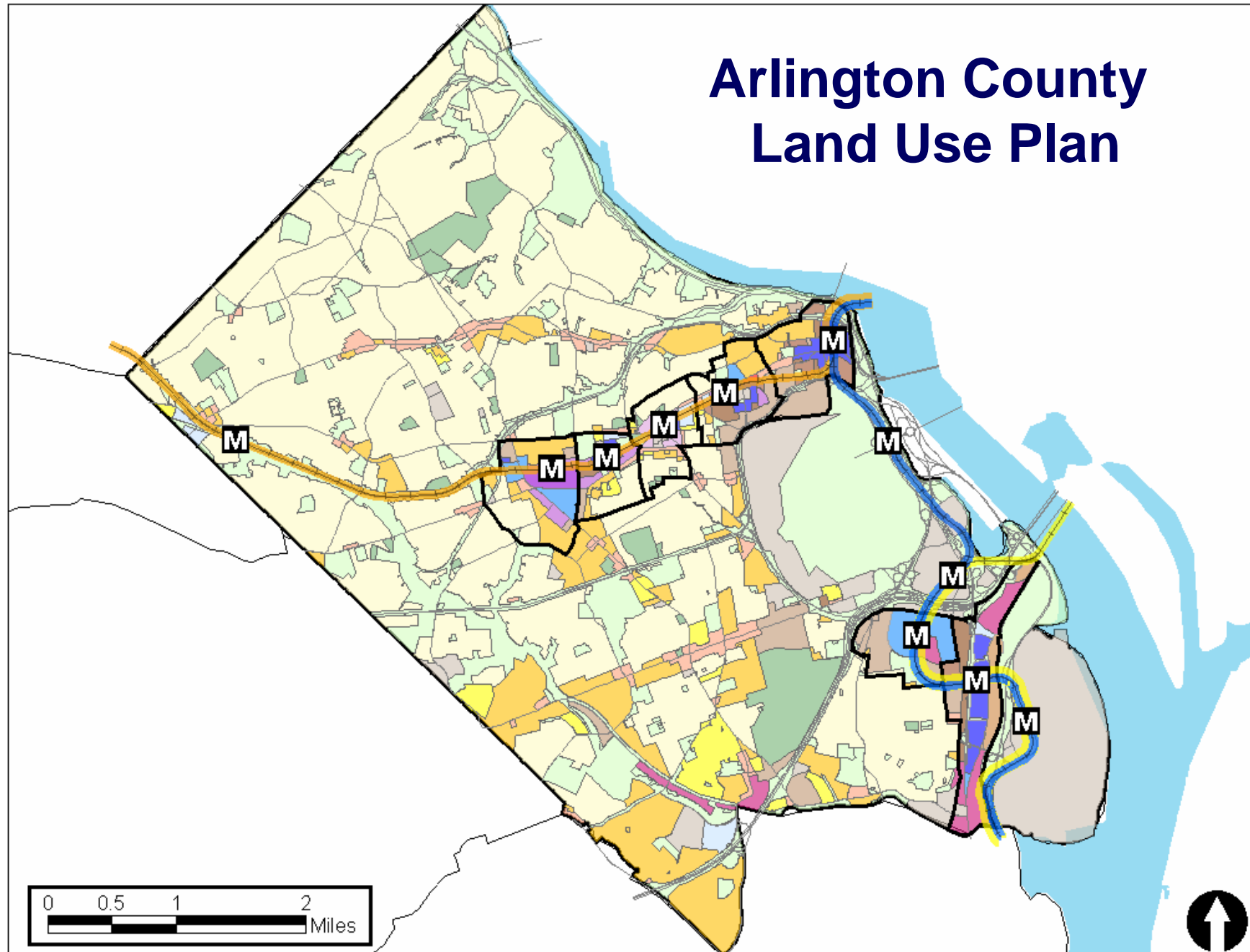
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When the planning started for metro:

- 89% of county planned low residential, garden apartment/th or retail
- 11 % of county (2 rail corridors) were re-planned to encourage mixed-use, high density development
- Zoning in the 89 % was primarily low density so little unplanned development can happen



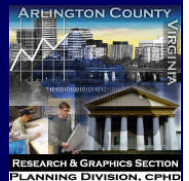
# Arlington County Land Use Plan



# HOW WE DID IT

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- Density incentive - GLUP for metro corridors indicated the county's willingness to rezone for higher density but land remained zoned for fairly low density
- In response to development proposals, county would rezone for higher density use shown on GLUP
- A special exception, **site plan** is used to approve the development



# HOW WE DID IT

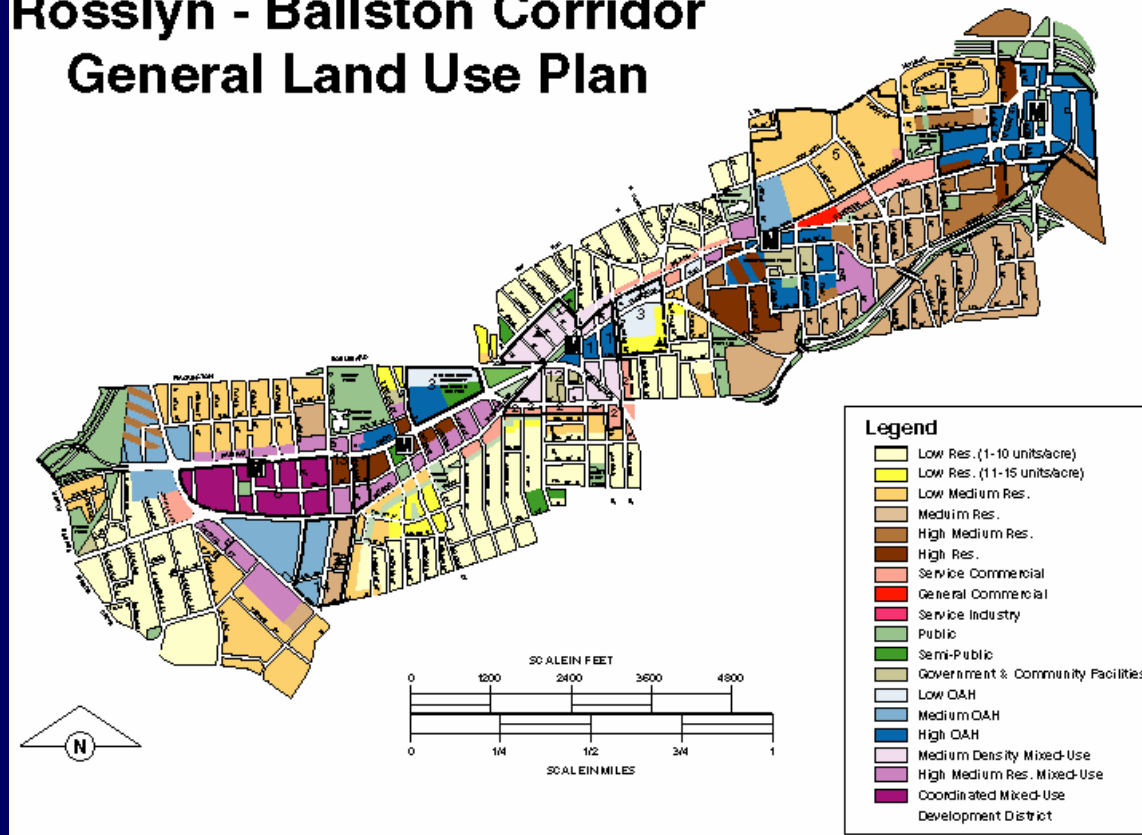
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- Site Plan allows only the specifically approved uses and design
- Property owner always maintains underlying by-right zoning until they implement approved site plan
- By-right development is at a much lower density with a more limited array of uses allowed



# HOW WE DID IT

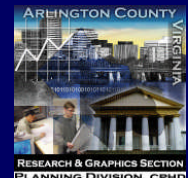
## Rosslyn - Ballston Corridor General Land Use Plan





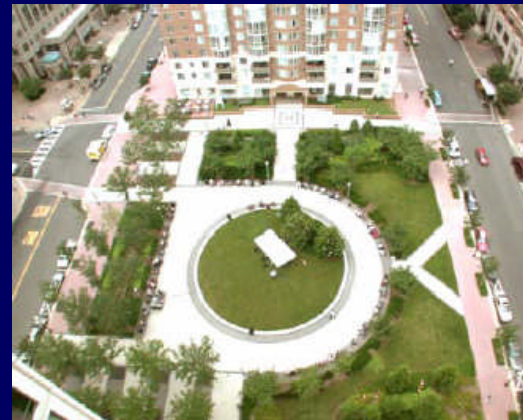
# HOW WE DID IT

- The site plan allows significantly higher density & height than underlying zoning
  - By-right 1.5 and 45 ft
  - Site plan -3.8 – 10 FAR and 100 - 300 ft
  - Parking - 2 spaces per 1,000 sq. Ft. Vs 4 spaces per 1,000 sq. Ft.
- Site plan is approved only if:
  - It complies with the standards of the zoning ordinance,
  - Is in compliance with the mix required by the GLUP
  - Provides the features called for in the sector plan for the area - including public improvements



# SITE PLAN

- Increased density in return for
  - Building the development we want
  - Where we want it
  - And building significant amount of the required and desired public improvements



# HOW WE DID IT

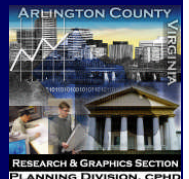
- Some of the zoning tools we've created include

## **Mixed use**

- C-0-A: 50/50 res/off mix up to 6.0 FAR can be 100 % residential
- R-C: 1.24 FAR office, 2.0 FAR residential - residential must proceed first or concurrent with office

## **Redevelopment**

- C-O Rosslyn: 10.0 FAR



# ROSSLYN TODAY

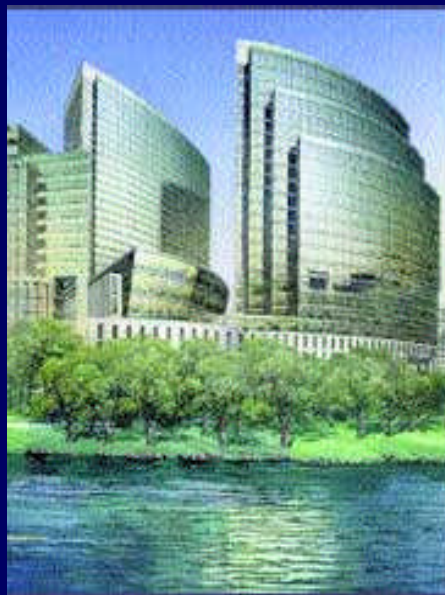


C-O Rosslyn  
Development: 10 FAR



# ROSSLYN TODAY

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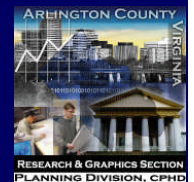


# AERIAL - COURTHOUSE TODAY



The Washington Monument

Arlington County Offices



# COURTHOUSE TODAY





# CLARENDON TODAY



# VIRGINIA SQUARE TODAY





# BALLSTON TODAY





# BALLSTON TODAY





# View of Rosslyn-Ballston Metro Corridor Development Patterns





# MEASURING SUCCESS

## R-B CORRIDOR 1970



**22,000 jobs**

**5.5 million sf office**

**7,000 housing units**



## R-B CORRIDOR TODAY



**94,000 jobs**

**23.5 million sf office**

**24,500 housing units**

# MEASURING SUCCESS

## METRO RIDERSHIP (Average daily entries and exits)

**1991**

**ROSSLYN**

■ 13,637

**COURT HOUSE**

■ 5,561

**CLARENDON**

■ 2,964

**BALLSTON**

■ 9,482

**2005**

**ROSSLYN**

■ 31,933

**COURT HOUSE**

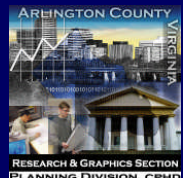
■ 14,765

**CLARENDON**

■ 7,218

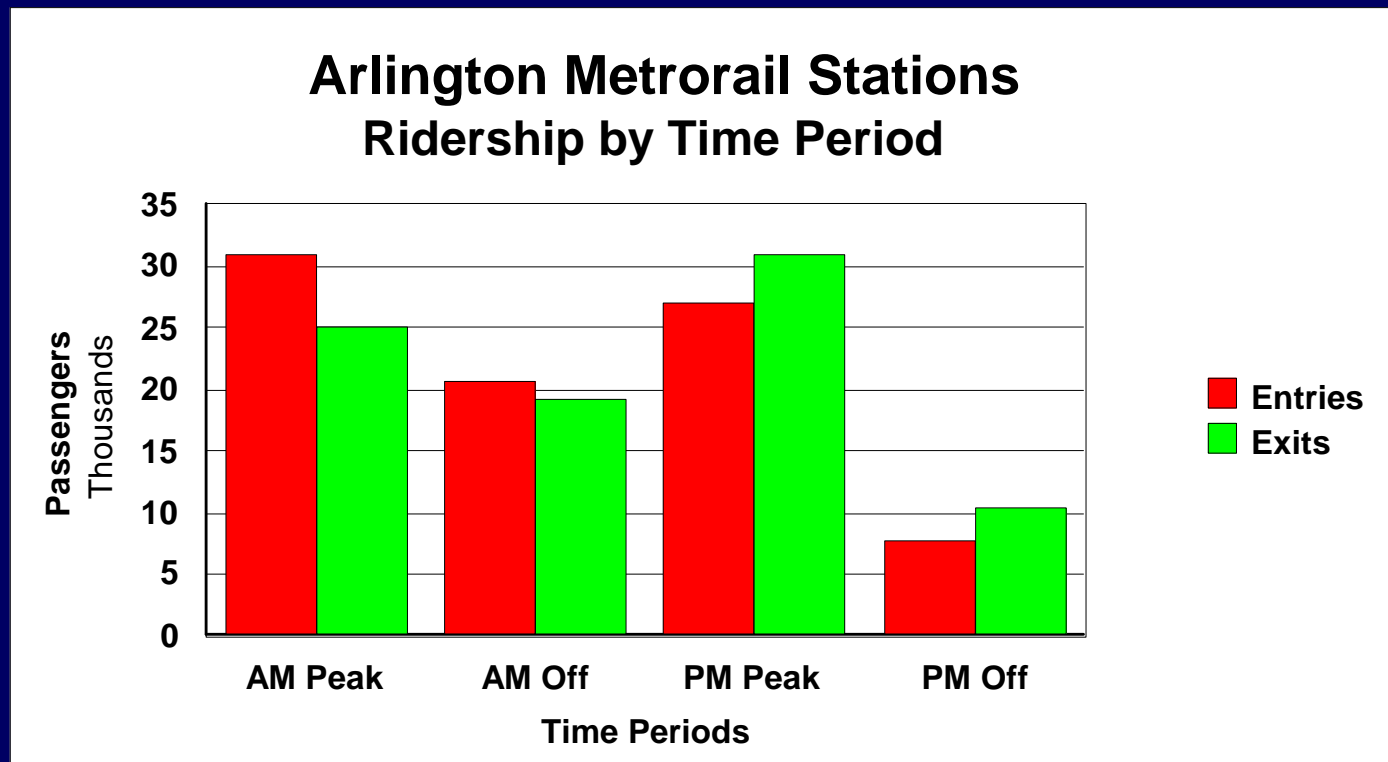
**BALLSTON**

■ 23,737



# MEASURING SUCCESS

BALANCED DEVELOPMENT =  
BALANCED RIDERSHIP

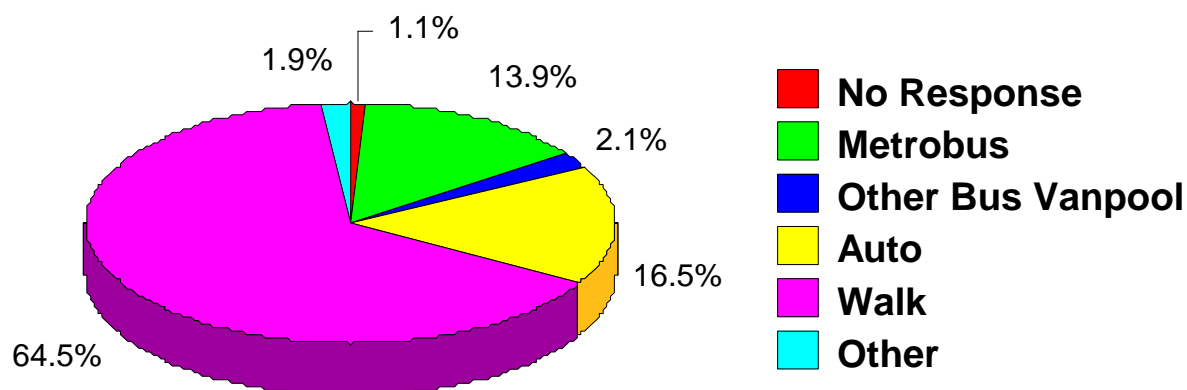




# PEDESTRIAN ACCESS

64% WALK TO STATION

## Ballston Metrorail Station Mode of Access and Egress



# MEASURING SUCCESS

## R-B CORRIDOR DEVELOPMENT:

**1970**

**OFFICE**

■ 5,568,600 SF

**RESIDENTIAL**

■ 7,000 UNITS

**Ratio of Residential  
to Office: 56/44**

**2002**

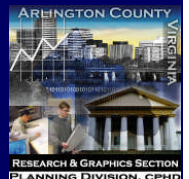
**OFFICE**

■ 23,580,700 SF

**RESIDENTIAL**

■ 24,500 UNITS

**Ratio of Residential  
to Office: 51/49**



# MEASURING SUCCESS

## HOUSING



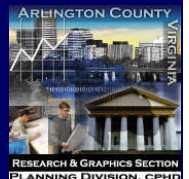
## POPULATION



# MODES OF WORK TRIP

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- 39% of those who live in corridor take transit to work
- Another 10% walk
- Those who live in corridor own 1.13 vehicles/ hh vs. 1.53 in the rest of county

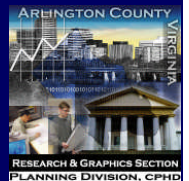




# MEASURING SUCCESS

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- \$12.7 billion of total \$27 billion in assessed land value in the county is in the metro corridors which is 11% of total land
- Today Arlington has more office space than downtown
  - Dallas
  - Pittsburgh
  - Denver



# 2000 CENSUS JOURNEY TO WORK DATA – REGIONAL COMPARISON

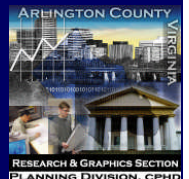
Location	R-B Corridor	Arlington County	Regional Core	Inner Suburbs
Total Workers	26,177	116,046	454,120	1,380,198
Drove Alone	41.7%	54.9%	46.8%	70%
Car Pooled	8.2%	11.5%	11.5 %	13.3%
Public Transit	38%	23.3%	27.8%	10.4%
Walked	8&	5.6%	8.7%	1.8%
Other	1.2%	1.4%	1.6%	.7%
Worked at Home	1.9%	3.5%	3.6%	3.8%



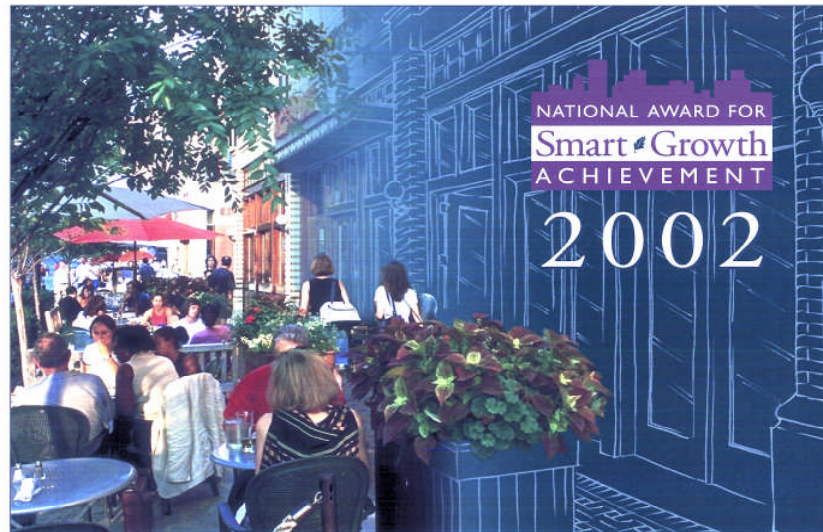
# MEASURING SUCCESS

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- County has maintained low property tax rate (\$.973 per \$100 fmv) and maintains amongst the highest levels of services
- County consistently maintains AAA bond rating from all rating agencies



# EPA SMART GROWTH AWARD



## National Award for Smart Growth Achievement

For effective planning, policies and **Overall Excellence in Smart Growth**,  
the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency recognizes the:

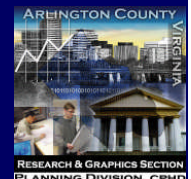
### Arlington County Government

for  
**Smart Growth in the Rosslyn-Ballston Metro Corridor.**  
This exceptional example of planning and implementation demonstrates a commitment  
to growth that makes sense for our environment, our economy, and our communities.



  
Christine Todd Whitman  
Administrator

November 18, 2002  
Date

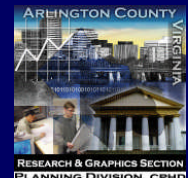




# LESSONS LEARNED

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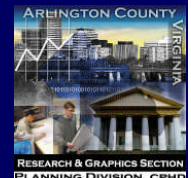
- Transit investments can be used as a catalyst to reshape communities
- Decide what you want, design supportive public policies/plans and tools and be patient
- Build community consensus
- Do the detailed planning at the sector area to avoid the battles at development review time
- Market needs to exist



# LESSON LEARNED

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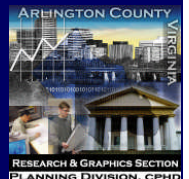
- Ensure that transit is integrated with development – not secondary
- An attractive and functional pedestrian environment is important
- Develop public-private partnerships to continue consensus building and assist in the implementation
- Have high expectations, plan well and be patient
- Integrity of plan
- Be consistent



# LESSON LEARNED

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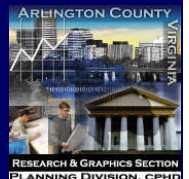
- Station areas must be able to satisfy the daily needs of users if they are to really to leave their cars behind (mixed use)
- Invest in the infrastructure, provide the planning context and establish the vision
- Reduce parking requirements
- Subsidize transit



# REFINING THE VISION - CHALLENGES

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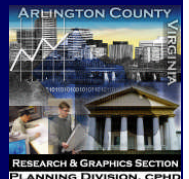
- Parking
- Quality retail
- Urban design/quality architecture
- Pedestrian improvements
- Conservation of urban fabric



# REFINING THE VISION - CHALLENGES

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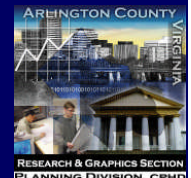
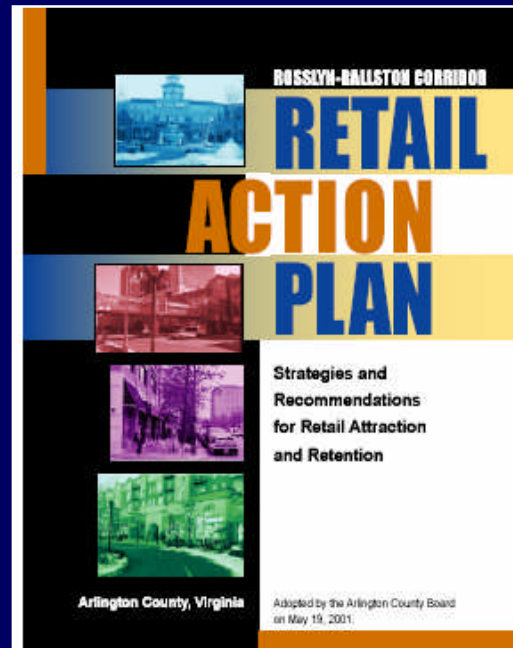
- Affordable housing
  - 11,700 new market rate units
  - Few affordable
  - New tools
    - Special affordable housing protection district
    - 25 % bonus
    - State enabled mandatory contribution





# REFINING THE VISION - CHALLENGES

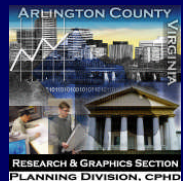
- Retail
  - Have not yet achieved the vital streets desired
  - Retail attraction and marketing plans



# REFINING THE VISION - CHALLENGES

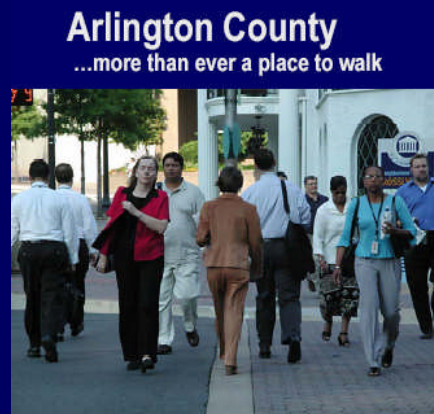
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- Urban design/quality architecture
  - Want class “a” buildings
  - Residential design challenges



# REFINING THE VISION - CHALLENGES

- Pedestrian improvements
  - Balancing
    - Through traffic vs pedestrian amenities
    - Narrowing streets
    - Widening sidewalks
    - Crosswalks
    - Walk arlington



 **WALKArlington**

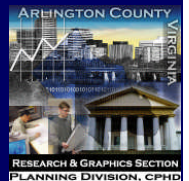
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# REFINING THE VISION - CHALLENGES

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- Conservation
  - How to balance economic development with conservation of existing fabric
  - Successful at encouraging consolidation - yet scale is often too large



# Arlington County, VA

